

What is claimed is:

1 1. A computer-implemented method of distributing image prints to a plurality of
2 recipients, the method comprising:
3 receiving an order specifying a plurality of recipients and, for each specified recipient, a
4 set of one or more images associated with that recipient;
5 for each of the plurality of recipients specified in the received order, printing at least one
6 copy of each image in the recipient's image set; and
7 distributing the printed image copies to their respective associated recipients.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein images in a first recipient's image set differ from
2 images in a second recipient's image set.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein print parameters of a first recipient's image set differ
2 from printing parameters of a second recipient's image set.

1 4. The method of claim 3 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein print parameters differ among images within an image
2 set.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein each image set comprises an arbitrary grouping of
2 images designated by a user.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving, printing and distributing are performed by a
2 single entity.

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein the performance of receiving, printing and distributing
2 is dispersed among two or more different entities.

1 10. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving an order is performed by an enterprise
2 providing a web front-end.

1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein printing or distributing, or both, are performed by a
2 fulfillment enterprise different than the enterprise providing the web front-end.

1 12. The method of claim 1 wherein printing and distributing are integrated processes.

1 13. The method of claim 1 wherein printing and distributing are performed by a single
2 entity.

1 14. The method of claim 1 wherein printing and distributing are performed by different
2 entities.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising, prior to printing, dividing the received
2 order into a plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order corresponding to a different recipient.

1 16. The method of claim 15 wherein printing comprises printing a set of one or more
2 images in each sub-order.

1 17. The method of claim 15 wherein printing comprises, for each sub-order, printing a
2 run of prints associated with a specified recipient.

1 18. The method of claim 17 further comprising printing a destination identifier that
2 identifies the specified recipient for a corresponding run of prints.

1 19. The method of claim 18 wherein the destination identifier delimits a corresponding
2 sub-order.

1 20. The method of claim 18 wherein printing the destination identifier comprises printing
2 one or more of the following items: a shipping address, a recipient's name, a thumbnail image
3 index, a bar code, a textual message and/or print re-ordering information.

1 21. The method of claim 18 wherein a first image in a sub-order has one or more print
2 parameters that differ from one or more print parameters of a second image in the sub-order.

1 22. The method of claim 21 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 23. The method of claim 15 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of sub-
2 orders comprises, for each image in the received order, instantiating a copy of the image for each
3 recipient designated to receive a print of that image.

1 24. The method of claim 23 wherein an instantiated copy comprises a digital image file.

1 25. The method of claim 15 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of sub-
2 orders is performed by a first entity and printing the sub-orders is performed by a second entity.

1 26. The method of claim 25 wherein the first entity comprises a photo-finishing
2 enterprise.

1 27. The method of claim 25 wherein the second entity comprises a goods / service
2 provider enterprise.

1 28. The method of claim 25 wherein the second entity comprises a supermarket, a
2 drugstore, a post office, or an online grocer.

1 29. The method of claim 25 wherein distributing the printed image copies comprises
2 delivering a recipient's printed image copies along with an unrelated order of goods / services
3 associated with that recipient.

1 30. The method of claim 1 wherein a recipient comprises an individual.

1 31. The method of claim 1 wherein a recipient comprises a business entity.

1 32. The method of claim 1 wherein a recipient comprises an address.

1 33. The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of recipients comprises an individual, an
2 address, a business entity, or any combination thereof.

1 34. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the specified recipients is different
2 from a user from whom the order was received.

1 35. The method of claim 1 wherein the order comprises a single transaction sequence.

1 36. The method of claim 35 wherein the single transaction sequence comprises a single
2 charge to a financial instrument.

1 37. The method of claim 36 wherein the financial instrument comprises a credit card, a
2 debit card, electronic funds transfer, a gift certificate, or a coupon.

1 38. The method of claim 35 wherein the single transaction sequence is terminated by a
2 click of an "order" button.

1 39. A computer-implemented method of distributing physical manifestations of digital
2 content to a plurality of recipients, the method comprising:
3 receiving an order specifying a plurality of recipients and, for each specified recipient, a
4 set of digital content associated with that recipient;
5 for each of the plurality of recipients specified in the received order, generating a
6 physical manifestation of the digital content in the recipient's digital content set; and
7 distributing the physical manifestations to their respective associated recipients.

1 40. The method of claim 39 wherein a set of digital content comprises one or more digital
2 images.

1 41. The method of claim 40 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises photographic prints of the one or more digital images.

1 42. The method of claim 39 wherein the physical manifestation of digital content
2 comprises a framed photographic print of a digital image.

1 43. The method of claim 39 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises photo-album pages bearing one or more digital images.

1 44. The method of claim 39 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises compositions of digital images and other graphical and/or textual content.

1 45. The method of claim 40 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises an artifact bearing a digital image.

1 46. The method of claim 45 wherein the artifact bearing a digital image comprises a
2 novelty item.

1 47. The method of claim 45 wherein the artifact bearing the digital image comprises a
2 shirt, a coffee mug, a key-chain, a mouse pad, a magnet, or a deck of playing cards.

1 48. The method of claim 39 wherein a set of digital content comprises graphical and/or
2 textual content.

1 49. The method of claim 48 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises cards bearing the graphical and/or textual content.

1 50. The method of claim 49 wherein the cards bearing the graphical and/or textual
2 content comprise one or more of the following: greeting cards, holiday cards, announcements,
3 playing cards, post cards, thank you cards, or invitations.

1 51. The method of claim 48 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises cards bearing the graphical and/or textual content.

1 52. The method of claim 48 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises advertisements bearing the graphical and/or textual content.

1 53. The method of claim 48 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises coupons bearing the graphical and/or textual content.

1 54. The method of claim 48 wherein the physical manifestation of the set of digital
2 content comprises a bound volume bearing the graphical and/or textual content.

1 55. The method of claim 54 wherein the bound volume comprises a photo-album.

1 56. The method of claim 54 wherein the bound volume comprises a travel book.

1 57. The method of claim 48 wherein the graphical and/or textual content comprises
2 digital images and/or digitized content.

1 58. The method of claim 48 wherein the graphical and/or textual content comprises
2 computer-generated content.

1 59. A computer-implemented method of distributing photographic prints to a plurality of
2 recipients, the method comprising:

3 (a) receiving an order specifying:

4 (i) a plurality of recipients;

5 (ii) for each specified recipient, a set of one or more digital images associated
6 with that recipient; and

7 (iii) for each digital image, a set of one or more print parameters;

8 (b) dividing the received order into a plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order
9 corresponding to a different specified recipient, each sub-order comprising an instance of each
10 digital image associated with the recipient corresponding to the sub-order;

11 (c) printing the instantiated digital images in each of the sub-orders according to the print
12 parameters associated with each image; and

13 (d) distributing the prints to their respective associated recipients.

1 60. The method of claim 59 wherein receiving an order comprises receiving interactive
2 input from a user of a computer system.

1 61. The method of claim 60 wherein the computer system comprises the user's personal
2 computer system.

1 62. The method of claim 60 wherein the computer system comprises a public entry
2 terminal.

1 63. The method of claim 59 wherein the print parameters include one or more of print
2 size, number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 64. The method of claim 59 wherein printing and distributing are integrated processes.

1 65. The method of claim 59 wherein receiving, dividing, printing and distributing are
2 performed by a single entity.

1 66. The method of claim 59 wherein the performance of receiving, dividing, printing and
2 distributing is dispersed among two or more different entities.

1 67. The method of claim 59 wherein receiving an order is performed by an enterprise
2 providing a web front-end.

1 68. The method of claim 67 wherein one or more of dividing, printing and distributing
2 are performed by a fulfillment enterprise different than the enterprise providing the web front-
3 end.

1 69. The method of claim 59 wherein printing and distributing are performed by a single
2 entity.

1 70. The method of claim 59 wherein printing and distributing are performed by different
2 entities.

1 71. The method of claim 59 further comprising printing a destination identifier that
2 identifies the specified recipient for a corresponding sub-order.

1 72. The method of claim 71 wherein the destination identifier delimits a corresponding
2 sub-order.

1 73. The method of claim 71 wherein printing the destination identifier comprises printing
2 one or more of the following items: a shipping address, a recipient's name, a thumbnail image
3 index, a bar code, a textual message and/or print re-ordering information.

1 74. The method of claim 59 wherein a first image in a sub-order has print parameters that
2 differ from print parameters of a second image in the sub-order.

1 75. The method of claim 59 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of sub-
2 orders is performed by a first entity and printing the sub-orders is performed by a second entity.

1 76. The method of claim 75 wherein the first entity comprises a photo-finishing
2 enterprise.

1 77. The method of claim 75 wherein the second entity comprises a goods / service
2 provider enterprise.

1 78. The method of claim 77 wherein the second entity comprises a supermarket, a
2 drugstore, a post office, or an online grocer.

1 79. The method of claim 59 wherein distributing the prints comprises delivering a
2 recipient's prints along with an unrelated order of goods / services associated with that recipient

1 80. A print distribution system comprising:
2 a front-end computer sub-system for receiving an order specifying a plurality of
3 recipients and, for each specified recipient, a set of one or more images associated with that
4 recipient;

5 a printing sub-system for printing at least one copy of each image in each recipient's
6 image set; and
7 a distribution sub-system for distributing the printed image copies to their respective
8 associated recipients.

1 81. The system of claim 80 wherein images in a first recipient's image set differ from
2 images in a second recipient's image set.

1 82. The system of claim 80 wherein print parameters of a first recipient's image set differ
2 from printing parameters of a second recipient's image set.

1 83. The system of claim 82 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 84. The system of claim 80 wherein print parameters differ among images within an
2 image set.

1 85. The system of claim 84 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 86. The system of claim 80 wherein each image set comprises an arbitrary grouping of
2 images designated by a user that placed the order.

1 87. The system of claim 80 wherein the front-end computer sub-system, the printing sub-
2 system and the distribution sub-system are controlled by a single entity.

1 88. The system of claim 80 wherein the front-end computer sub-system, the printing sub-
2 system, and the distribution sub-system are dispersed among two or more different entities.

1 89. The system of claim 80 wherein the front-end computer sub-system is controlled by
2 an enterprise providing a web front-end.

1 90. The system of claim 89 wherein the printing sub-system or the distribution sub-
2 system, or both, are controlled by a fulfillment enterprise different than the enterprise providing
3 the web front-end.

1 91. The system of claim 80 wherein the printing sub-system and the distribution sub-
2 system are integrated.

1 92. The system of claim 80 wherein the printing sub-system and the distribution sub-
2 system are controlled by a same entity.

1 93. The system of claim 80 wherein the printing sub-system and the distribution sub-
2 system are controlled by different entities.

1 94. The system of claim 80 wherein the printing sub-system comprises a sub-system for
2 dividing the received order into a plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order corresponding to a
3 different recipient.

1 95. The system of claim 94 wherein the printing sub-system prints a set of one or more
2 images in each sub-order.

1 96. The system of claim 94 wherein, for each sub-order, the printing sub-system prints a
2 run of prints associated with a specified recipient.

1 97. The system of claim 96 wherein the printing sub-system further prints a destination
2 identifier that identifies the specified recipient for a corresponding run of prints.

1 98. The system of claim 97 wherein the destination identifier delimits a corresponding
2 sub-order.

1 99. The system of claim 97 wherein printing the destination identifier comprises printing
2 one or more of the following items: a shipping address, a recipient's name, a thumbnail image
3 index, a bar code, a textual message and/or print re-ordering information.

1 100. The system of claim 94 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of sub-
2 orders comprises, for each image in the received order, instantiating a copy of the image for each
3 recipient designated to receive a print of that image.

1 101. The system of claim 100 wherein an instantiated copy comprises a digital image file.

1 102. The system of claim 94 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of sub-
2 orders is performed by a first entity and printing the sub-orders is performed by a second entity.

1 103. The system of claim 102 wherein the first entity comprises a photo-finishing
2 enterprise.

1 104. The system of claim 102 wherein the second entity comprises a goods / service
2 provider enterprise.

1 105. The system of claim 104 wherein the second entity comprises a supermarket, a
2 drugstore, a post office, or an online grocer.

1 106. The system of claim 104 wherein distributing the printed image copies comprises
2 delivering a recipient's printed image copies along with an unrelated order of goods / services
3 associated with that recipient.

1 107. The system of claim 80 wherein a recipient comprises an individual.

1 108. The system of claim 80 wherein a recipient comprises a business entity.

1 109. The system of claim 80 wherein a recipient comprises an address.

1 110. The system of claim 80 wherein the plurality of recipients comprises an individual,
2 an address, a business entity, or any combination thereof.

1 111. The system of claim 80 wherein at least one of the specified recipients is different
2 from a user from whom the order was received.

1 112. The system of claim 80 wherein the order received by the front-end computer
2 system comprises a single transaction sequence.

1 113. The system of claim 112 wherein the single transaction sequence comprises a single
2 charge to a financial instrument.

1 114. The system of claim 113 wherein the financial instrument comprises a credit card, a
2 debit card, electronic funds transfer, a gift certificate, or a coupon.

1 115. The system of claim 112 wherein the single transaction sequence is terminated by a
2 click of an "order" button

1 116. A computer-implemented method of distributing image prints to a plurality of
2 recipients, the method comprising:

3 receiving, at a facility corresponding to a first entity, an order specifying a plurality of
4 recipients and, for each specified recipient, a set of one or more images associated with that
5 recipient;

6 communicating the received order to a facility corresponding to a second entity;
7 at the second entity's facility, for each of the plurality of recipients specified in the
8 received order, printing at least one copy of each image in the recipient's image set; and
9 distributing the printed image copies to their respective associated recipients.

1 117. The method of claim 116 wherein the first entity comprises a photo-finishing
2 enterprise.

1 118. The method of claim 116 wherein the second entity comprises a goods / service
2 provider enterprise.

1 119. The method of claim 118 wherein the second entity comprises a supermarket, a
2 drugstore, a post office, or an online grocer.

1 120. The method of claim 118 wherein distributing the printed image copies comprises
2 delivering a recipient's printed image copies along with an unrelated order of goods / services
3 associated with that recipient.

1 121. The method of claim 116 wherein, prior to communicating the received order to the
2 facility corresponding to the second entity, the first entity divides the received order into a
3 plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order corresponding to a different recipient.

1 122. The method of claim 121 wherein printing comprises printing a set of one or more
2 images in each sub-order.

1 123. The method of claim 121 wherein printing comprises, for each sub-order, printing a
2 run of prints associated with a specified recipient.

1 124. The method of claim 123 further comprising printing a destination identifier that
2 identifies the specified recipient for a corresponding run of prints.

1 125. The method of claim 124 wherein the destination identifier delimits a corresponding
2 sub-order.

1 126. The method of claim 124 wherein printing the destination identifier comprises
2 printing one or more of the following items: a shipping address, a recipient's name, a thumbnail
3 image index, a bar code, a textual message and/or print re-ordering information.

1 127. A computer-implemented method of distributing image prints to a plurality of
2 recipients, the method comprising:

3 receiving an order from a user at a public entry terminal, the order specifying a plurality
4 of recipients and, for each specified recipient, a set of one or more images associated with that
5 recipient;

6 transmitting the received order from the public entry terminal to a photo-finishing
7 facility;

8 for each of the plurality of recipients specified in the received order, printing at the photo-
9 finishing facility at least one copy of each image in the recipient's image set; and

10 distributing the printed image copies to their respective associated recipients.

1 128. The method of claim 127 wherein receiving the order from the user at the public
2 entry terminal comprises reading digital images from a computer-readable medium provided to
3 the public-entry terminal.

1 129. The method of claim 128 wherein the computer-readable medium comprises a
2 FLASH memory, a CD-ROM or a diskette.

1 130. The method of claim 127 wherein receiving the order from the user at the public
2 entry terminal comprises receiving manual input specifying the plurality of recipients and the set
3 of one or more images associated with each recipient.

1 131. The method of claim 127 wherein the public entry terminal comprises a digital drop
2 box, a point-of-sale station, or a kiosk.

1 132. A computer-implemented method of ordering image prints for a plurality of
2 recipients, the method comprising receiving at a host system an order from a client system, the
3 order corresponding to a single transaction sequence and specifying a plurality of recipients and,
4 for each specified recipient, a set of one or more images associated with that recipient.

1 133. The method of claim 132 further comprising, at the host system, dividing the
2 received order into a plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order corresponding to a different
3 recipient.

1 134. The method of claim 133 further comprising printing a set of one or more images in
2 each sub-order.

1 135. The method of claim 133 wherein further comprising, for each sub-order, printing a
2 run of prints associated with a specified recipient.

1 136. The method of claim 135 further comprising printing a destination identifier that
2 identifies the specified recipient for a corresponding run of prints.

1 137. The method of claim 136 wherein the destination identifier delimits a corresponding
2 sub-order.

1 138. The method of claim 136 wherein printing the destination identifier comprises
2 printing one or more of the following items: a shipping address, a recipient's name, a thumbnail
3 image index, a bar code, a textual message and/or print re-ordering information.

1 139. The method of claim 133 wherein a first image in a sub-order has print parameters
2 that differ from print parameters of a second image in the sub-order.

1 140. The method of claim 139 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 141. The method of claim 133 wherein dividing the received order into the plurality of
2 sub-orders comprises, for each image in the received order, instantiating a copy of the image for
3 each recipient designated to receive a print of that image.

1 142. The method of claim 141 wherein an instantiated copy comprises a digital image
2 file.

1 143. The method of claim 132 wherein images in a first recipient's image set differ from
2 images in a second recipient's image set.

1 144. The method of claim 132 wherein print parameters of a first recipient's image set
2 differ from printing parameters of a second recipient's image set.

1 145. The method of claim 144 wherein print parameters include one or more of print size,
2 number of copies, print finish, and/or a textual message.

1 146. The method of claim 132 wherein print parameters differ among images within an
2 image set.

1 147. A computer-implemented method of processing an order for a physical
2 manifestation of digital content, the method comprising:
3 receiving an order specifying a plurality of recipients and, for each specified recipient, a
4 set of digital content associated with that recipient;
5 dividing the received order into a plurality of sub-orders, each sub-order corresponding to
6 a different recipient, by instantiating a digital copy of the digital content for each recipient
7 designated to receive a physical manifestation of that digital content; and
8 generating a physical manifestation of the digital content in the recipient's digital content
9 set.

1 148. The method of claim 147 wherein the digital content comprises a digital image and
2 the physical manifestation comprises a photographic print of the digital image.

1 149. The method of claim 147 further comprising distributing the physical manifestations
2 to their respective associated recipients.

1 150. The method of claim 147 wherein the receiving and dividing are performed by a first
2 entity and the generating is performed by a second entity.

1 151. The method of claim 150 wherein the first entity comprises a photo-finishing
2 enterprise and the second entity comprises a goods / service-provider enterprise.

1 152. The method of claim 147 wherein receiving, dividing and generating are performed
2 by a single entity.

1 153. The method of claim 147 wherein the performance of receiving, dividing and
2 generating is dispersed among two or more different entities.

1 155. The method of claim 154 wherein dividing or generating, or both, are performed by
2 a fulfillment enterprise different than the enterprise providing the web front-end.